

Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center

Abingdon, Virginia



Virginia Green is the Commonwealth of Virginia's campaign to promote environmentally-friendly practices in all aspects of Virginia's tourism industry. **Virginia Green** has established "core activities" specific to each sector of tourism, and these practices are considered the required minimum for participation in the program. However, **Virginia Green** encourages its participants to reduce their environmental impacts in all aspects of their operations; and this profile provides a full list of all their "green" activities. These are the activities that guests / customers can expect to find when they visit this facility.

Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center

"We operate a combined education and conference facility. Ten colleges and universities hold classes here."

Green Statement: "As an educational institution, we feel it is our responsibility to be a leader in environmental education of both students and the public."



CORE ACTIVITIES for Conference Centers

"☑" This symbol indicates a required activity for Virginia Green Conference Centers. Participants self-certify that these activities are in place and they provide additional specifics on other activities. Visitors to the **Education Center** can expect the following practices:

☑ **Recycling and Waste Reduction.** All conference centers must provide for recycling at their events. Aluminum can and plastic bottle recycling are a must. Recycling of steel cans, cardboard, office paper, and composting of waste foods are encouraged as well. This facility pledges that they:

- Recycle: aluminum cans, plastic, office paper, toner cartridges, newspaper, cardboard, fluorescent lamps, batteries, electronic equipment
- Numerous recycling bins are available for use throughout the facility
- Track overall waste bills
- kitchen (or meetings/events)
- Donate excess food from events
- dining room (or meetings/events)
- Use reusable dishware and glassware & minimize use of disposables
- Use water pitches and filtered water to minimize the use of single-use bottles
- restrooms
- Use bulk soap dispensers in public restrooms
- Purchase recycled-content paper-towels and toilet paper
- building and grounds
- Using "green" Cleaners (www.greenseal.org) that are dispensed in bulk
- Purchase durable equipment and furniture

- Purchase low-VOC carpets and fabrics
- Use latex paints
- Properly recycle and/or disposal of thinners and solvents (required by EPA-RCRA)
- Perform preventative maintenance on all appliances, HVAC systems, plumbing, and vehicles
- Use less toxic materials
- Use a nutrient management plan that minimizes the use of fertilizers in landscaping

☒ **Styrofoam elimination and reduction of disposables.** Virginia Green Conference centers are encouraged to eliminate or minimize the use of Styrofoam-based products and to use alternative disposables that are made of natural products and/or are bio-degradable. This facility pledges that they:

- Catering guidelines ban the use of Styrofoam products

☒ **Water Conservation.** The facility must have a plan for conserving water that should consider plumbing modifications and landscaping. This facility pledges that they:

- Track overall water usage and wastewater
- Have a numeric goal to reduce water consumption over time
- Perform preventative maintenance to stop drips and leaks
- Use water-flow metering to discover leaks and areas of high use
- Have:
 - low flow restrictors on faucets and showerheads
 - low flow toilets
 - waterless urinals
- Discourage water-based cleanup (sweeping first)
- Have an effective landscape management plan which utilize drought tolerant species, and minimizes lawn areas
- Have an effective stormwater management plan

☒ **Energy Conservation.** The facility must have a plan in place that encourages replacement of lighting and equipment to energy-efficient alternatives. This facility pledges that they:

- Track overall energy bills
- Have had an energy audit to identify efficiency opportunities
- Have a numeric goal of how much they want to reduce their energy usage over time
- Have an "energy management system" in place to track and meter energy usage
- Use:
 - compact fluorescent light bulbs in all rooms and in canned lighting
 - LED Exit Signs
 - high efficiency fluorescent ballasts and lamps (T5s and T8s)
- Have high efficiency heating & air conditioning (HVAC) systems
- Perform preventative maintenance on HVAC system
- Have individual thermostats for each room/area
- Have installed additional insulation
- Use natural lighting
- Use lighting sensors to turn on/off lights
- Use occupancy sensors to turn on/off lights
- Purchase EnergyStar-rated computers, copiers, and appliances
- Have thermal-rated windows and insulation
- Used LEED criteria when developing new buildings
- Are working to achieve LEED-EB (existing building) certification through operational changes and renovations

☒ **Green Events Package.** Virginia Green conference centers must offer a "green" or "environmentally-friendly" package for conferences, meetings and other events. Even if the facility only offers occasional, small events, at least recycling will be provided. This facility pledges that they:

- Promote the availability of "green meetings/conferences" in marketing packages
- Provide pitchers of water instead of bottles
- Promote the use of biodegradable products

For more information on **Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center**, see www.swcenter.edu or contact **Joyce Brooks** at jbrooks@swcenter.edu or 276-619-4349.

For more information on the *Virginia Green* program, see www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/viriniagreen/homepage.html or go to www.viriniagreentravel.org.



Virginia Green is the Commonwealth's campaign to encourage environmentally-friendly practices in all aspects of Virginia's tourism industry. *Virginia Green* is supported through a partnership between the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the Virginia Hospitality & Travel Association, and the Virginia Tourism Corporation.

